THE SENTINEL

"A Fenian Memory"

Sophie L. MacIntosh, in "Belgravia."

I was lounging on the low wall at Sandymount, Strand, Ireland, watching the water lazily creep up over the yellow sand, and in the distance, the cockle pickers, bent nearly double at their work, their bare legs and bright colored petticoats gleaming in the sun. It was my first visit to the "distressful country," and looking at the peaceful scene before me, I found it well nigh impossible to imagine the fair land shaken from time to time by fierce passion and lust of blood; to think of the mirth-loving sons of Erin fighting like demons against law and order. My reverie was interrupted by a big brown bearded man, who came up and asked for a light. We entered into conversation, and, following out my train of thought, I told him how difficult I found it to realize that there could be discontent under such a smiling surface.

"There never was a period in the history of Ireland when patriotic feeling was so utterly dead as it is at present," said he. "Famine and emigration have killed the true Irish feeling. A poetic imitation of patriotism is practised by a few idle people of the upper middle class, but it does not touch the nation, it is picturesque and harmless. On the very wall where you are sitting now Fenian plots were hatched in '66. I was a boy of fourteen then, and we lived on the Strand Road. Many a time I saw the chief conspirators sitting just here, or walking up and down talking earnestly. Long afterwards I recognized them by their portraits as the leaders of the Fenian movement. You Englishmen forget that though the Irish are a conquered nation they are not subuded. They have never taken kindly to their captors. Indeed, I think it is your own fault, but that is an Irishman's view," said he, with a pleasant smile, "and I apologise."

"Go on," replied I.

"The Fenian rising was an honest, open rebellion, not like the disgraceful affair of thirteen years ago, that led to nothing but secret assassination and shooting innocent people from behind hedges. That brought out all the worse traits in the character of the Celt. But I am growing loquacions and impertinent, sir; I forget that this old history can have no interest for you."

I hastened to assure him that it was the dream of my life to hear an Irishman's side of the story, and that it would be all the better from the lips of one who could remember it.

"Well," said he, "if you really care about it, I can tell you a story that never appeared in print. Look," said he, pointing with the stem of his pipe into the distance, "you see the tide rising—it is creeping slowly up, filling a pool here and there; covering up the yellow sand, but leaving some patches far out still dry. It was just like that the tide of discontent rose and spread, till, at last, the whole country was swept by a wave of rebellion from the Causeway to Cape Clear. The hillside men were drilling everywhere in the moonlight.

> Down the hills twining, their blessed steel shining,
> Like rivers of beauty they flow from each glen;
> From mountain and valley, 'tis Libertie's rally,
> Out, and make way for the Fenian men.

"Every day the papers were full of rumored risings, guns were found in the most unsuspected places, and the old Irish pike (a deadly weapon) made its reappearance in many an Irish cabin. The conspiracy would have been very formidable but for the treachery of one of its most trusted brothers, who picked his friend's pocket of important documents while he slept, and then betrayed the plot to the Government. This man afterwards met the fate that he deserved. He was found in London with a dagger through his heart. The words 'Ireland's vengeance,' were written on a piece of paper attached to the handle.

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"One dark night I heard two men talking on the Strand Road, and I caught a sentence or two that made me hide in the shadow and listen breathlessly. To my amazement, I learnt that the man known as Mr. Cuthbert, whose open life had apparently no mystery in it, was really Michael O'Connor, the most dangerous and powerful Fenian of them all. His identity had been betrayed, and these men, who were detectives, were even now planning the the manner of his arrest, by which they hoped to cover themselves with glory. The warrant was not yet signed, but would be on the morrow, so Michael O'Connor had only about twelve hours to escape.

"There was but one thing to be done. I went in mad haste to warn my friend of his danger. I ran so fast that before I reached the house the soles of my feet were aching as if they had been slapped, and my heart beating so violently that I had to stop and recover my breath before I knocked. Mr. O'Connor (as I will call him now) was in the dining room. I told him briefly what had happened, and his face grew stern as he listened. 'I was expecting this,' he said, 'but not so soon; I must go away to night. If I had only twenty-four hours start I could defy them; as it is I am in deadly peril.' Then a divine inspiration flashed into my mind. At present the resemblance between my father and O'Connor even extended to their walk, for both had a limp—my father's the result of a sprained ankle from which he had not quite recovered, and O'Connor's was permanent. The great idea was this. That my father should visit O'Connor's garden the following morning. If the police saw him enter, they would think it was O'Connor returning from bathing, as he often did at that hour. My friend agreed that the plan was Napoleonic. If it succeeded it would give him just the start he needed, and if it failed it was the fortune of war. Michael O'Connor was very pale, but his voice was steady as he said good-bye under the portraits of Lord Edward and Emmett.

"A lamp was burning on the wide chimney piece, and the dying fire threw a flickering light on the pictured faces of the dead patriots, making them glow with a fictitious life. Probably they had gone through such scenes in their troubled lives. 'You have been the best and truest friend to me in the world,' said Michael O'Connor, taking my hand. 'I shall never cease to thank you all my life for what you have done to-night. I am an outcast now, but some day, please Heaven, we shall meet in happier times.' I was just a stupid boy, and, though I felt I was living in an historic incident, I could only stammer out, 'God save Ireland!' 'God save Ireland and us all!' he replied in his musical voice, which I did not hear again for eight years.

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"Michael O'Connor escaped to America, and Molly and her aunt followed him when things were a little quieter. The old brown house was shut up, and grass and weeds grew rank and long, choking up the roses and lavender in the pretty garden. In course of time I went into Trinity, but I never forgot Mollie. Her blue eyes came between me and my work, and sometimes, quite suddenly, a memory of the scent of that garden would rush over me like a wave. Then I felt I must cross the sea and find her out. At last it grew too strong to be borne, and when I was twenty I went to America. I found sweet Mollie Cuthbert sweeter than ever, and to make a long story short, I married her, and if you care to visit us you will see that we are sweethearts still."

DREYFUS'S HOME AT L'ISLE DU DIABLE.—Dreyfus's plight is indeed a pitiful and terrible one. His house, which is a rudely built shanty of one small room, containing a plank bed, table and chair, is constructed within, and completely covered by, a huge iron cage about ten feet high and twelve feet square, similiar to those used for immuring wild beasts in a menagerie. On no pretence whatever is he permitted outside the narrow confines of this barbarous prison. Two sentries armed with loaded rifles watch religiously over him night and day, being relieved every two hours, and they have strict injunctions to mercilessly shoot down the prisoner should he make a dash for deeply yearned liberty. They are rigorously forbidden to hold any intercourse whatever with the degraded officer under pain of the most severe penalties. Recently a sergeant was reduced to the ranks for deigning to answer in a moment of abstraction an interpolation by Dreyfus as to when the mails would arrive. This is stated to be the only occasion upon which Dreyfus has spoken to a human being since his incarceration, and it is a wonder that the solitary confinement has not deprived him of his reason. Dreyfus's life is, indeed, intolerable. He has to rise with the sun, and is compelled to show himself for five minutes every hour in his outer cage until sunset, when he retires, so that the governor of the penal colony upon the adjacent islands can testify, by the aid of his field glasses, that the prisoner is still in safe custody, and report the matter direct by cable to Paris. His clothes are of the roughest description, and his food of the coarsest. When he ventures outside his primitive bedchamber he is confronted with the gaunt iron bars of his cage, which gall him terribly. He paces the green sward that skirts his shanty feverishly, and gazes in sad abstraction and anxiety out to sea, looking in vain for help. At long intervals he is permitted to write to his sorrowing family in France, and although subjected to stringent surveillance, the authorities deleting anything which they do not care to pass, the epistles are so harrowing in the vividness of the detailed horrors and intense misery in this living hell, that the most hard-hearted can scarcely fail to be moved to pity. The outside world is to him a perfect blank. He is utterly in ignorance of the strenuous efforts that have been made in Paris to establish his innocence, as any passages in his few letters from home relating thereto are ruthlessly cut out by the authorities.

THE NUMBER of German towns and cities having electric railways was: Three, in 1891; 11, in 1893; 20, in 1894; 34, in 1895; 42, in August, 1896. At the end of 1897 the number was about 80. The overhead trolley is used most; three lines have a mixed overhead and underground system, two have overhead conductors, combined with storage batteries, and two have the current supplied by accumulators only.